

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 20282 261646Z
ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3886
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STADIS//////////

FOR EUR/RPM LEDOGAR FROM GAMMON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OGEN
SUBJ: PROPOSED DOD RESEARCH STUDY IN FRANCE

REF: STATE 160775

1. WE OPPOSE THE PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY. YOU ASKED
FOR OUR EVALUATION OF:

A. THE FEASIBILITY OF CARRYING OUT THE STUDY
WITHOUT ATTRACTING MEDIA OR OTHER INTEREST. WE BELIEVE
IT INEVITABLE THAT THE STUDY WOULD ATTRACT ATTENTION
IN THE MEDIA, AMONG POLITICAL PARTIES, AND IN SEGMENTS
OF THE GOF (E.G., LONG-TIME GAULLISTS) WHO ARE NOT
FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD NATO OR THE US. THIS IS
BOUND TO OCCUR DURING THE COURSE OF 3-1/2 MONTHS OF
RESEARCH IN FRANCE WHICH WOULD INVOLVE INTENSIVE INTER-
VIEWING IN A WIDE SPECTRUM OF FRENCH DEFENSE AND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIALS. FURTHERMORE, WE NOTE
THAT THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR WOULD BE ASSISTED
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BY A RETIRED FRENCH GENERAL; THE RETIRED (1977) CHIEF
OF ODC (MAAG) FRANCE WHO NOW WORKS FOR EMERSON ELEC-
TRONICS (A MAJOR US DEFENSE CONTRACTOR); A GERMAN
NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT; AND A BRITISH CITIZEN. THIS
INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR FURTHER INCREASES THE VISIBILITY
OF THE EXERCISE.

B. THE POSSIBLE HARM THAT MIGHT ENSUE IF THE

STUDY DID BECOME AN ISSUE IN THE PRESS OR GOF. IN THE CURRENT FRENCH DOMESTIC POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, PRESIDENT GISCARD IS REGULARLY ACCUSED OF MOVING FRANCE QUIETLY BACK INTO NATO. WHEN THIS STUDY HITS THE PRESS, IT WOULD BE GRIST FOR THAT MILL. THE RESULT WOULD HAVE TO BE GOF DENIAL OF ANY CONNECTION WITH THE LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM (LTDP). THIS WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE QUIET COOPERATION ON THE LTDP WHICH HAS EXISTED OVER THE PAST YEAR, THUS RUNNING COUNTER TO THE GOAL STATED IN THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION: "DRAW FRANCE CLOSER TO THE ALLIANCE."

2. WE WOULD ADD THAT WE ARE NOT UNMINDFUL OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS STUDY AND THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN SECRETARIES VANCE AND BROWN IN WHICH SECRETARY VANCE DECLINED TO ESTABLISH A SENIOR CIVILIAN DOD POSITION IN THIS EMBASSY.
HARTMAN

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